Thursday
December 14, 2017

TODAY **63 / 41** Partly sunny

FRIDAY **59 / 39** Partly sunny

SATURDAY **58 / 43** 40% chance of rain late

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METRO & STATE, B1

BASTROP OFFICIAL INDICTED ON ABUSE OF OFFICE

SPORTS, C1

SO LONG, NO. 60

Longhorn legend Tommy Nobis dies at 74

AUSTIN360, D1

HIT THE HIGHWAY WITH THE BLANTON'S 'OPEN ROAD'

CONGRESS TAXES

GOP says there's a deal on tax bill

President Donald Trump speaks during a meeting with lawmakers working on tax cuts at the White House on Wednesday. MANUEL BALCE CENETA / ASSOCIATED PRESS

Lawmakers aim for a vote on the legislation next week despite Democratic criticisms over the pace.

Jim Tankersley
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WASHINGTON — House and Senate Republicans have reached an agreement, in principle, on a consensus tax bill, keeping the party on track for final votes next week with the aim of delivering a bill to President Donald Trump's desk by Christmas, according to people briefed on the deal.

Sen. John Cornyn of Texas, the majority whip, told reporters that Republicans were being briefed on the deal Wednesday, and that he is confident it will be approved next week.

The agreement drops the corporate tax rate to 21 percent from the current 35 percent rate and will go into effect in 2018, rather than 2019, as the Senate bill originally called for, according to a senior Republican congressional aide. The bill also allows individuals to deduct up to $10,000 in state and local taxes, split between property taxes and either income or sales taxes paid. That move is intended to alleviate the concerns of House Republicans, particularly those from California, over the bill's treatment of the state and local

Tax bill continued on **A4**

ALABAMA ELECTION

Some Republicans happy Moore lost, but party on edge

Democrat Doug Jones' upset Senate win stark sign for GOP midterms.

By Steve Peoples and Alan Fram
Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Weary national Republicans breathed a collective sigh of relief Wednesday, a day after voters knocked out their own party's scandal-plagued candidate in deep-red Alabama. Yet all is not well in a party confronted with new rounds of infighting and a suddenly shrinking Senate majority heading into next year's midterm elections.

A semi-humbled President Donald Trump conceded that Roy Moore's loss was not his preferred outcome. He said he "would have liked to have had the seat" and an important Senate vote as he and GOP lawmakers scratch for legislative victories.

But he also acknowledged, "A lot of Republicans feel differently. They feel very happy about the way it turned out."

Indeed, it was easy to find establishment-minded Republicans – in and out of Washington – who cheered Moore's loss as the impact of the Alabama stunner echoed throughout the political world. The prospect of a high-profile Republican senator dogged by sexual misconduct accusations – and an all-but-certain ethics

Alabama continued on **A5**

NEW DETAILS JUDICIAL APPOINTMENTS

Willett confirmed as federal judge; other Texan gets boot

Jeff Mateer had called transgender children evidence of 'Satan's plan.'

By Maria Recio
American-Statesman special correspondent

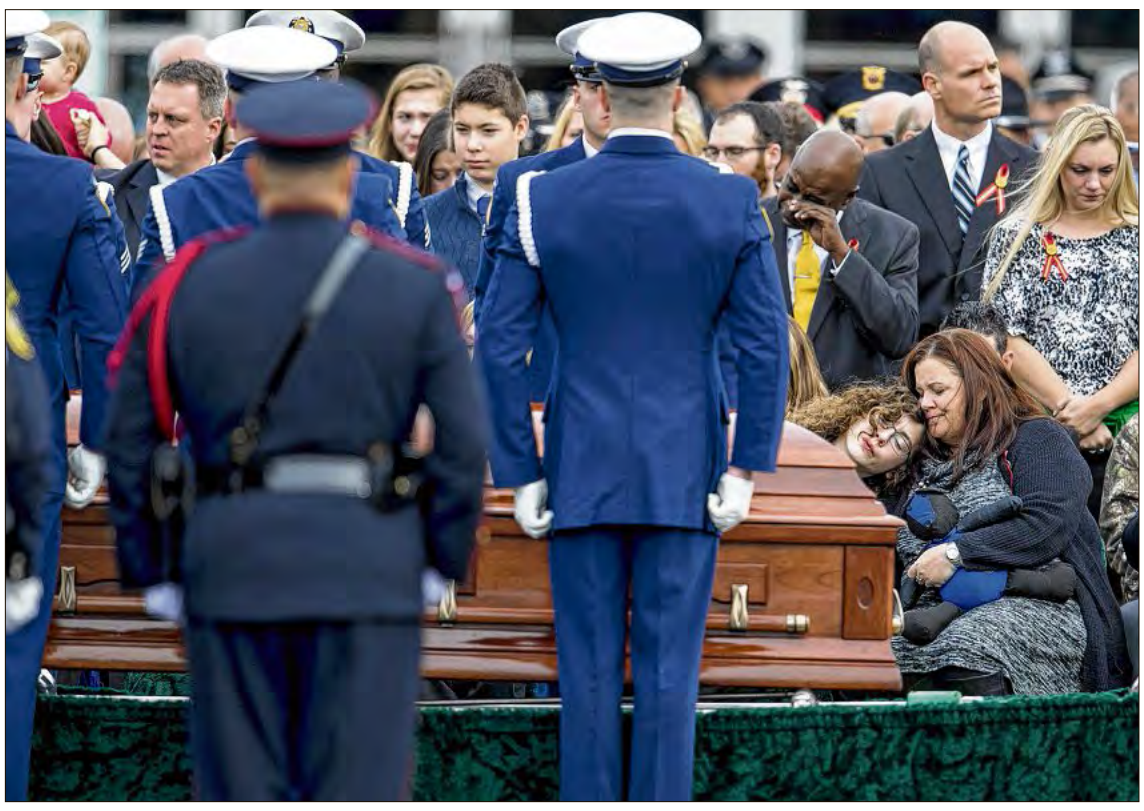
WASHINGTON — It was a split decision Wednesday for federal judge nominees from Texas.

The U.S. Senate confirmed Texas Supreme Court Justice Don Willett to be a judge on the 5th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals, but the White House pulled back from supporting Jeff Mateer, a top official in the Texas attorney general's office who had called transgender children evidence of "Satan's plan," for a Plano-based federal judge position.

Willett, who had faced sharp questions from Democrats on the Senate Judiciary Committee, was approved 50-47 along party lines for the New Orleans-based judgeship. Mateer, meanwhile, was cut loose by the White House after he and another judicial nominee came

Judiciary continued on **A4**

CONTINUING COVERAGE SAN MARCOS POLICE DEATH



Visitors mourn San Marcos police officer Kenneth Copeland at a service Wednesday at Community Bible Church in San Antonio. Police officers from across Texas were in attendance. JAY JANNER / AMERICAN-STATESMAN

San Marcos officer mourned as a hero

Kenneth Copeland remembered for his compassion, humor.

By Taylor Goldenstein and Nolan Hicks
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nhicks@statesman.com

Officer Kenneth Copeland was fatally shot Dec. 4 while serving an arrest warrant.

SAN ANTONIO — In the days since San Marcos police officer Kenneth Copeland died last week, Joe Fratangelo had been identifying himself to others as Copeland's best friend. College fraternity brothers who later served as police officers together, they'd been friends for 38 years.

"But after speaking with so many of you all," Fratangelo said at Copeland's funeral service Wednesday, "it's obviously a title I'm going to have to share because he made everybody feel that he was their best friend."

The service at Community Bible Church in San Antonio drew hundreds of mourners, most of them uniformed police officers from jurisdictions across Texas and a few federal agencies, who nearly filled the 3,500-capacity room.

The 58-year-old veteran peace officer and Coast Guard officer was fatally shot Dec. 4 while serving an arrest warrant. His death marks the first time a San Marcos police officer has been killed in the line of duty.

The shooting suspect, Stew-

Copeland continued on **A4**

NATION & WORLD, A2

Palestinian president wants U.S. out of talks

Mahmoud Abbas calls on United Nations to remove Washington as peace mediator after Trump says Jerusalem is Israel's capital.

NATION & WORLD, A8

Deputy AG defends Mueller from attacks

Republicans on House Judiciary Committee cite FBI texts as they claim special counsel's team may be biased against president.

METRO & STATE, B1

City manager finalists offer visions for Austin

The final two contenders for Austin city manager speak before the public at the Austin Convention Center.

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